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SUBJECT: Bolivia CN Update December 09

REF: LA PAZ 3; 09 LA PAZ 1820

[1](#). SUMMARY:

\* Interdiction: Seizures of cocaine HCl and coca leaf declined significantly in 2009 compared to the previous year. Seizures of solid and liquid precursor chemicals, and cocaine recycling and HCl labs rose dramatically. (paras 2-6).

\* Eradication: The Joint Eradication Task Force (JTF) eradicated 6,295 hectare equivalents (HAs) in 2009, surpassing the GOB's 2009 target of 5,000 HAs. (paras 7-9).

\* Development and Training: NAS Director attended a graduation ceremony for the Second Advanced International Women's Counter Narcotics Course. Significant NAS-sponsored training continued. (paras 10-13).

\* Prevention and Demand Reduction: NAS funded and coordinated training for 98 rehabilitation clinic staff members. (para 14).

\* Aviation: NAS C-130B Program (Black Devils) flew 32 hours in support of CN operations. NAS Helicopter and Small Wing Program (Red Devils) continued maintenance on one of its two Cessnas. (para 15).

END SUMMARY.

## Interdiction Statistics

¶2. 2009 vs. 2008: See Ref B for comparative statistics 2008 and 2009.

## Interdiction Operations

¶3. FELCN Commander Oscar Nina reported that in CN forces seized 1,179 kilos of cocaine during a joint border-operations conducted in November and December with Peru, Chile, Brazil, and Argentina. Nina highlighted the importance of these initiatives and stated that such joint operations will continue in the future.

¶4. On December 22, FELCN Santa Cruz Viru Viru airport seized approximately 10 kilos of cocaine HCl hidden in boxes of Christmas toys en route to Madrid. No arrests were made. Santa Cruz FELCN Director Jorge Romero told reporters that drug traffickers had also recently hidden cocaine in dentures, picture frames, and crib mattresses.

¶5. Approximately 25 percent of the drugs seized during 2009 came from the Department of Santa Cruz, according to FELCN Santa Cruz Director Colonel Jorge Romero. Speaking at a press conference, Romero stated that the largest changes in 2009 were "an exponential increase" in marijuana (FELCN Santa Cruz seized 15 tons seized in 2009, a 2,900 percent increase over 2008), the proliferation of Colombian-style labs, and the increasing presence of foreigners (220 detained in Santa Cruz in 2009).

¶6. FELCN arrested on December 11 Augusto Toro Blacut, the 22-year old leader of a drug organization engaged in illegal trade between Bolivia and Norway. Toro, a dual Bolivian-Norwegian citizen, had been declared a wanted fugitive by Interpol.

## Eradication

¶7. JTF eradicated 6,341 HAs in 2009, surpassing the GOB's 2009 target of 5,000 HAs. During the same period in 2008 JTF eradicated 5,484 HA, over 15 percent less than in 2009. JTF destroyed 30,479 square meters of seedbeds in 2009, a significant decrease from the approximately 64,436 square meters destroyed in 2008. (Note: The destruction of 10 square meters of seedbeds prevents the eventual cultivation of one hectare of coca. End Note.).

¶8. Vice Minister of Social Defense Felipe Caceres told reporters in late December that coca cultivation grew by approximately 6 percent in 2009 and has extended into new territories (especially in the Yungas). Caceres said President Morales is concerned with this growth and ordered the procurement of new helicopters, planes, and radar equipment to combat coca growth and drug trafficking.

## Law Enforcement Training and Institutional Development

¶9. NAS Director attended the December 11 graduation ceremony for the Second Advanced International Women's Counter Narcotics Course held at the "International Antinarcotics Garras Del Valor Training Academy" in Chimore. This three-month course covered counternarcotics operations, land navigation, escape and evasion, and jungle survival training. It is one of the most rigorous counter-narcotics jungle operational course in the region, and considered to be a significant accomplishment for the graduates of the school. Only 41 of the 78 female officers who began completed the course. Seven of the women were from Ecuador and Panama.

¶10. NAS, in conduction with the GOB, identified, selected, and provided the U.S. training and certification for 10 BNP officers who will be assigned in January to the recently created CN polygraph Unit. The Unit will report directly for the Vice Minister of Social Defense and Minister of Government. NAS

provided the U.S. training and certification of these BNP officers and will continue to support this GOB initiative. NAS is also coordinating with the Attorney General to create an official Polygraph unit within the Public Ministry (Judicial Branch), which will be examine all personnel assigned to the CN Prosecutor Program.

¶11. Other NAS-funded training during the month included:

\* A one-week BNP course in Trinidad on Administrative Procedures for Disciplinary Actions. Forty-five police officers attended this course, which was conducted by investigators from the BNP's Office of Professional Responsibility and Disciplinary Tribunal.

\* A two-week Advanced Interview Techniques course in Oruro. Seventy-nine police and prosecutors attended.

¶12. NAS is working to incorporate several new courses into the 2010 curricula at the Garras CN training school, including a Tactical CN Operations course for prosecutors, and a Crowd Control course for security personnel assigned to the eradication projects.

#### Trafficking in Persons & Victim Assistance Programs

¶13. On December 21 & 22 Santa (accompanied by the Charge and NAS Director), made a surprise visits December 21 several TIP victim shelters that the US Mission La Paz supports. One of the shelters, Centro de Terapia Mujeres, located in Villa Fatima, La Paz, is supervised by the Bolivian government and currently houses 19 girls between the ages of 12 and 17 who were rescued from the streets in La Paz as sexual exploitation victims. The second shelter, Las Madres Adoratrices, is supervised by the Catholic Church and houses 18 young women who are victims of abuse or trafficking, all of whom have small children of their own. Several GOB officials attended these events, including representatives from the Bolivian Congress and the Governor's office.

#### Prevention and Demand Reduction

¶14. NAS worked with the GOB's Health Ministry and the Therapeutic

Communities Bolivian Association (ABCT) to conduct a three-day training seminar for ABCT staff in the cities of Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, and La Paz. The NAS-funded program taught 98 staff members (from 50 ABCT centers across the country) modern prevention techniques, rehabilitation practices, and program management concepts. ABCT anticipates that the program will benefit at least 500 clients and their families. This is the first phase in a more in-depth training program designed to improve the services offered by Bolivian rehabilitation centers throughout the country.

#### Aviation

¶15. The NAS C130 Program (Black Devils) flew 32 hours for the month of December, including flights for the GOB to Chimore for an eradication closing ceremony. They also flew missions to Chimore for rotation of FTC, NAS Trinidad support to Cobija, Riberalta and Guayamerin and flight to Patrick AFB with RDTF/INL cargo- hours in support of CN operations. The NAS Helo and Small Wing Program (Red Devils Task Force) NAS completed the last of our helicopter refurbishments in the UH-1H fleet. The RDTF now has nine UH-1H helicopters ready to fly. The RDTF continued extensive maintenance on one of its two Cessnas.  
Creamer